

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Patent Application

Inventor(s) M. L. Obradovich

Case 9800.1028

Serial No. Examiner TBA

Filing Date Group Art Unit

Title Multimedia Information and Control System for Automobiles

**PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT
AND INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT**

I hereby certify that this paper is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks, Washington, D.C. 20231, on January 2, 2002.

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Signature

January 2, 2002
Date of Signature

**THE COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20231**

Sir:

Applicant submits herewith an Information Disclosure Statement in the above-identified patent application. In addition, applicant hereby preliminarily amends the application before its examination on the merits as follows:

IN THE SPECIFICATION

After the title on page 1, **insert** the following paragraph:

This application is a division of U.S. Application Serial No. 09/848,391 filed on

20201019 9403001

May 3, 2001, which is a continuation of U.S. Application Serial No. 09/355,433 accorded a filing date of July 27, 1999, which is a National Stage of International Application No. PCT/US98/01119 filed on January 5, 1998, and which is a continuation-in-part of U.S. Application Serial No. 08/789,934 filed on January 28, 1997, maturing into U.S. Patent No. 6,009,355 issued on December 28, 1999.

IN THE CLAIMS

Cancel claims 1-128.

Add claims 129-154 as follows:

129. A method for assisting a user of a vehicle comprising:
determining whether the vehicle needs a service;
obtaining GPS data concerning a location of at least one service provider for providing the service when it is determined that the vehicle needs the service;
obtaining GPS data concerning a current location of the vehicle; and
comparing the GPS data concerning the location of the at least one service provider with the GPS data concerning the current location of the vehicle in selecting a service provider to provide the service.

130. The method of claim 129 further comprising communicating to the user information about the selected service provider when the selected service provider is within a predetermined distance from the current location of the vehicle.

131. The method of claim 130 wherein the information is communicated via audio media.

132. The method of claim 130 wherein the information is communicated visually.

133. The method of claim 129 wherein GPS data concerning a location of the selected service provider is supplied to a navigator for providing directions to reach the location of the selected service provider.

134. The method of claim 129 further comprising determining a distance between a location of the selected service provider and the current location of the vehicle based on the respective GPS data.

135. The method of claim 134 wherein the selected service provider is selected based on the distance.

136. The method of claim 129 wherein the selected service provider includes a service station.

137. A method for use in a system in a vehicle comprising:
storing GPS data concerning locations of a plurality of service providers;
identifying a condition of the vehicle;
retrieving GPS data concerning a location of at least one of the plurality of service providers in response to the condition; and
comparing GPS data concerning a current location of the vehicle with the retrieved GPS data to select a service provider to attend to the condition.

138. The method of claim 137 wherein the condition includes a maintenance warning.

139. The method of claim 137 further comprising communicating information about the selected service provider when the selected service provider is within a predetermined distance from the current location of the vehicle.

140. The method of claim 139 wherein the information is communicated via audio media.

141. The method of claim 139 wherein the information is communicated visually.

142. The method of claim 137 wherein GPS data concerning a location of the selected service provider is supplied to a navigator for providing directions to reach the location of the selected service provider.

143. The method of claim 137 further comprising determining a distance between a location of the selected service provider and the current location of the vehicle based on the respective GPS data.

144. The method of claim 143 wherein the selected service provider is selected based on the distance.

145. The method of claim 137 wherein the selected service provider includes a service station.

146. A system for use in a vehicle comprising:

A memory for storing GPS data concerning a plurality of service providers;
a mechanism for identifying a condition of the vehicle, GPS data concerning at

least one of the plurality of service providers being retrieved from the memory in response to the condition; and

a processor for comparing GPS data concerning a current location of the vehicle with the retrieved GPS data to select a service provider to attend to the condition.

147. The system of claim 146 wherein the condition includes a maintenance warning.

148. The system of claim 146 further comprising an interface for communicating information about the selected service provider when the selected service provider is within a predetermined distance from the current location of the vehicle.

149. The system of claim 148 wherein the information is communicated via audio media.

150. The system of claim 148 wherein the interface includes a display element, and the information is displayed on the display element.

151. The system of claim 146 wherein GPS data concerning a location of the selected service provider is supplied to a navigator for providing directions to reach the location of the selected service provider.

152. The system of claim 146 wherein a distance between a location of the selected service provider and the current location of the vehicle is determined based on the respective GPS data.

153. The system of claim 146 wherein the selected service provider is selected based on the distance.

154. The system of claim 146 wherein the selected service provider includes a service station.


Remarks

This application is a division of U.S. Application Serial No. 09/848,391 filed on May 3, 2001, which is a continuation of U.S. Application Serial No. 09/355,433 accorded a filing date of July 27, 1999, which is a National Stage of International Application No. PCT/US98/01119 filed on January 5, 1998, and which is a continuation-in-part of U.S. Application Serial No. 08/789,934 filed on January 28, 1997. The latter matured into U.S. Patent No. 6,009,355 issued on December 28, 1999. The specification has been amended to include such a priority claim. Accordingly, a marked-up version of page 1 of the specification, with the priority claim inclusion indicated in bold, is enclosed.

Applicant has cancelled claims 1-128. Claims 129-154 have been added in response to a restriction requirement imposed in the parent application.

In addition, applicant brings to the Examiner's attention the references listed on the attached Form PTO-1449 (12 pages). Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. 1.98(d), copies of these references are not enclosed, as they were previously cited by or transmitted to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office in the parent, grandparent and/or great grandparent applications identified above. It is respectfully requested that the listed references be made of record in the present application.

Respectfully,
Michael L. Obradovich

By 
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212-836-7363

Date: January 2, 2002
Enclosures

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

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Description

MULTIMEDIA INFORMATION AND CONTROL SYSTEM FOR AUTOMOBILES

This application is a division of U.S. Application Serial No. 09/848,391 filed on May 3, 2001, which is a continuation of U.S. Application Serial No. 09/355,433 accorded a filing date of July 27, 1999, which is a National Stage of International Application No. PCT/US98/01119 filed on January 5, 1998, and which is a continuation-in-part of U.S. Application Serial No. 08/789,934 filed on January 28, 1997, maturing into U.S. Patent No. 6,009,355 issued on December 28, 1999.

Technical Field

The invention relates generally to information and control systems and, more particularly, to a system for use in an automobile which facilitates a user's retrieval and/or dissemination of information, and control of vehicle functions.

Background of the Invention

Information is vital to day-to-day activities. With no access to information, people cannot function efficiently in this society, and their lives and financial well-being are put in jeopardy. People want to be well-informed, so much so that when they are travelling in automobiles, they tune into local radio stations to listen to news, weather forecasts and traffic conditions. For that matter, some automobiles are equipped with audiovisual systems including television (TV) receivers. One such system is disclosed in U.S. Patent No. 5,404,443 issued to Hirata. The Hirata system provides audiovisual information in a number of modes including a TV mode, which may be selected by control switches disposed on the periphery of a display.

Automobile users like to be continually updated